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ELIZABETH WATERHOUSE

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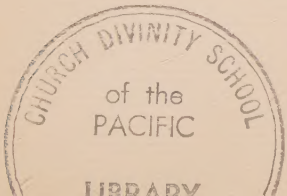

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1909

First Published . . *October 14th, 1909*
Second Edition . . *November 1909*

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INTRODUCTION

OF The Tertiary himself a few words must be said. He belonged to a small Franciscan company of the Third Order, as instituted by the Poverello in its primal simplicity, a Brotherhood known only to one another and to their Lord.

At heart an Anchorite, he yet mingled freely and with high honour in the great world of thought and action; but it did not touch him. He carried with him an atmosphere of joyous detachment, a radiant clothing of the spirit, which kept him apart from all that is common and mean, and from those who knew him best made a kind of sweet separateness, which they did not even desire to penetrate

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All worship was to him sacred, since he believed that in its most degraded forms, among the most ignorant and foolish of worshippers, there has yet been some true seeking after the Divine, and that between these and the most glorious ritual or the highest philosophic certainty, there lies so small a space that we may believe the Saints in Paradise regard it with a smile.

Toward Heresy his cherished belief, liable perhaps to misunderstanding, was this. The Church holding the Right Opinion or Orthodoxy, rightly, as a precious thing, has said of the man who should hold another opinion (Heterodoxy is Another or a New Opinion), "Come, let us burn him"; not his body perhaps, but the Spirit by which he works, his influence

in the world; and this she has said, thinking to do God service. But in so far as that Otherness of his was not evil, not rebellion, but one of the new things revealed by the Holy Spirit, the Teacher of Souls, one of the "many things" of which our Master spoke, telling the Disciples "Ye cannot bear them now," in so far no fire could destroy it; the flame of the sacrifice has gone up to heaven and become a light that has lightened the World—and the Church. So it has been, he said, in all Thought, in every Art, in every Science. The Fore-runners have at first been scoffed at, or persecuted, or looked upon with fear, or just not accepted; or disregarded, and allowed to tread the upward path in which they fore-ran alone. And this, too, has been a part of the Great Ordering of the World,

so that the Truth is made more sure, proved and perfected by the suffering of those to whom it is revealed.

Behind, are the Authority and the Splendour and the triumphant organ-tones of the Past; before, is the Prophet, poor and despised, crying in the Wilderness. But in the passing of the years it is that cry that has led the World, whether he be acclaimed or forgotten.

All contradictions were to The Tertiary a breath of the infinite air, for he knew that the Vital Truth can never be set in words or in formulæ of man's making, and that from Paradox, the clash of Opposites, is struck out the flash, momentarily seen, of that Divine and beautiful Thing.

In his dealings with other men he was singularly confiding, believing al-

ways in some better self behind the most sordid natures; and when, as sometimes happened, he met with ingratitude or other base return, those who loved him have seen a strange light on his face as of some sudden joy, and they knew that it was the joy of being one with The Ever-Blessed who ever gives to an unthankful World.

It may be said, and believed by some, that The Tertiary had no real existence, but is a creature of the imagination. But of how great a question is this the beginning! Have all the Philosophers yet seen clearly whether any one of us is more—or less—than a Thought?

E. W.

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SLEEPLESSNESS

SLEEPLESSNESS

THE children cannot sleep, the children of this world, in this foolish, hurrying Time. Children too, indeed, of Nature, our gentle Mother. She says, as all wise mothers say, that they have had a day too full of play or work, too eager, too awakening. She knows why they toss among the white pillows till morning makes grey squares upon the curtain.

To-morrow, yes, and all to-morrows, she must see to it that they pass quieter days, that they come at evening and read a chapter from the big Bible and say their prayers at her knee, and so put away the busy thoughts of the day. So Mother Nature says, but alas! —they do not listen.

In the sweet, old, quiet days, when

men did great things because they were never in a hurry, they thought each night an image in small, a Type, a possible beginning too, of the long Night —which is indeed the Day.

The darkness brought holy musings as surely as it brought the Stars, and with thoughts floating out into the wide sea of Infinite Being, Sleep, who dwells in that calm Region, came unsought.

Instead of the peevish wail of the sleepless, was the wise desire of the wakeful spirit to rise and give thanks in the Night Watches, and to let no hour pass without its prayer.

THE GREAT MYSTERY

THE GREAT MYSTERY

To the end of Time human thought will circle round the Great Mystery of Evil, and the utmost we can hope is that this circling may take the upward path of a gentle spiral, from which, in the End, it may spring to the knowledge not to be attained till that great consummation.

I have been led by more than one writer to the thought of a certain limitation of the Power of God as the key to this mystery, and such thought need not trouble me as new or profane if I go back to the question which puzzled my childhood, "Can God make that not have been done which has been done?" *There* is at once a limit set, yet it does not lower our thought of Him. We may see, when the open

vision is given, that another form of limitation has been as inevitable in the nature of Eternal Essence as this.

And if there is limitation, may we not think that either this limitation comes from the existence of an Evil Power one day to be overcome, "when all things shall be subdued unto Him," words which point to a real victory over a real Enemy; or that Matter contains the resisting, limiting power. So that when God, as pure Spirit, first touched the void and made it spin out suns and worlds, at that moment began the possibility of conflict, of Evil? (My God, forgive me if my thought dishonours Thee.) God, who then, so in all reverence I would think, *chose the Cross*, knew that strife was a necessity involved in that touch, spirit and matter, spirit and flesh in conflict, yet with it the final victory of a Paradise of souls redeemed as the

glorious alternative to that unawakened void.

The Philosopher tells me that matter apart from mind, or thought, does not exist, but Matter, even so, as a *Thought* of the Eternal Mind may be separate from pure Spirit as a Thought of that Mind. I think the Philosopher may allow this.

Is not the belief then in this limitation the keenest spur to all work for God, *all* work, from the smile of kindliness to the grandest scheme for the world's bettering, because we gain the hope that we are really working with Him and for Him, not like children playing at helping their mother, who could do her task more quickly without them. Life becomes more real for this thought, the thought that *He needs us.*

We can guess how in His ordering of the thoughts of men it was well that the great Paradox of Infinite

Power, Infinite Love, and a world of Pain and Sin, should so long have been faced as inevitable, that men should not have realised the meaning of the words "My Father worketh hitherto" (work implies resisting material), nor have set together the words "Jesus wept," "Jesus groaned in Himself," with "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."

It was well perhaps that so the spirit of man should bow before Almighty Power, wondering through tears how it could be one with Infinite Love; but may His message to us now be of another sort? Men have disputed much about the Divinity of the Son, have they now to learn the Humanity of the Father?

THE BREATH OF GOD

THE BREATH OF GOD

My spirit has been sent to dwell upon the Star called "Earth," and now that Star is hastening along a path which hides my dwelling-place more and more from the light of the Sun. Night grows, Day dwindles, and all things mourn in the shadows.

I pass about my garden plot, the pleasant paths are hidden by black sodden leaves, the branches they have left are bare above me, their fruit is long since gathered and garnered, the flowering plants I loved have crept down to their little graves in the dark earth.

And I—it is even so with me. Feeble steps, failing sight, an autumn weariness, old age.

Why all this fading and faltering?

Who could have guessed so glorious an answer? Because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it!

So, in all this, I meet Thee, I find Thee, I feel Thy very breath, O Master of my days, the Breath of Life, for there is no life without what we call "Death." Except the corn fall into the ground and die, it abideth *alone*. If it feel Thy breath it is alone no longer. Then welcome all Thy winter, being Thine.

HERESY

HERESY

FROM all false Doctrine, Heresy and Schism—canst thou pray to *be delivered?* Of Doctrine who shall say? Perhaps it matters little—but Heresy? At the word I see a long, keen line of Light, the Very Truth borne down the highway of the ages by their hands, those whom the Church has called Heretics, and made into Schismatics.

I believe in a true Apostolical Succession through these, without whom God has never left His world, and does not leave it now.

Were not the Apostles, was not indeed our Master Himself, on the side where the Orthodox do not stand, and with Him ten thousand of His Saints, to whom the truth has been shown

first which the Church has perhaps seen afterwards, or never seen?

From all barren Orthodoxy—Good Lord deliver us!

THE CANDLE OF THE LORD

THE CANDLE OF THE LORD

WHEN the mystic of mystics by the River of Chebar saw "the Appearance of the Likeness of the Glory of the Lord," he fell upon his face.

Then he heard the voice of One that spake, who said "Son of Man, stand upon thy feet—and I will speak unto thee."

Was not this an eternal truth? To kneel indeed is good; to fall upon his face indeed, down, down in utter abasement, is often what the servant must do before the Master of his spirit, the body borne down by penitence or adoration. But that is not all He asks.

When He would speak with thee, He wants thy whole manhood erect before Him, thy listening ear, thy seeing eye, thy reason quickened to understand.

Has not this message come to all true mystics, that they must seek the Very Truth through all that may hide; seek with "the Candle of the Lord," as that wise Platonist, Benjamin Whichcote, would say: "The candle lighted by God, and lighting to God, *Res illuminata, illuminans.*"

It is because they have seen the Invisible and heard unspeakable words that they have seemed to others babblers, for they come back from that hidden Land with secrets they cannot reveal. Yet to them has been the clear vision of the "Sapphire Throne, and the Likeness as the appearance of a Man upon it."

Some would dwell only on these words of our Master, "I thank Thee that Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent"—or of St Paul, "The wisdom of the wise is foolishness with God," and so they still lie on their faces when He would

speak. These forget His other words, "How is it that ye do not understand?" and how often He reproved those who heard Him for their wilful blindness, the dullness of their minds. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy *mind*." "Son of Man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee."

THE SCHOOL

THE SCHOOL

THE mystery of innocent suffering—of the "groaning of creation"—must indeed always be hidden from our eyes, but for ourselves cannot we believe that each hour of the body's pain or the heart's desolation is a page in the lesson-book which the dear Master places in His children's hands, and that we shall find this lesson even here to have been just what we needed for the comforting of others? And if so, may we not also believe that when we are "about our Father's business" in His House, sent forth to lay healing hands on the wound of the world, we shall be the better equipped for this service by every pain of the body we have laid aside, every mood of heart-break or despondency passed through in our mortal day?

THE KEYS

THE KEYS

THOU art Peter, and upon this Rock will I build My Church, and I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.

I am He that liveth, and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the Keys of Hell and of Death.

The Keys, how strangely held! The Keys of the Kingdom hang at Peter's girdle—while in The Master's hand lie those others, Keys of the terrible places, of Death and Hades.

Yet not strange. To Peter was given to open the door into the holy life and fellowship, as when he saw the vision which told him of God's wide welcome to all, in every nation, that work righteousness. He was

afterwards disobedient to the Heavenly Vision, and began that churlishness with the Keys which since then, through all the ages, has kept closed locks against some Saints of God.

That Other holds the Keys for opening all prison doors—the strongest, the cruellest; He opens and no man shuts.

Oh, my Master, the binding and loosing may be with Simon Peter, and with those who hold their wardenship from him, but their bonds shall be but as the green withes upon Samson if Thy strength be in Thy chosen, for the Keys of Death and Hades are not in the hands of Cephas, but in Thine Who art alive for evermore.

SUFFER US NOT

SUFFER US NOT

SUFFER us not for any pains of Death to fall from Thee.

From Thee, indeed, we cannot fall, but from that knowledge of Thee to which Thy Spirit has led us. Suffer us not to fall, through the extremity of bodily anguish, to any unrighteous or cringing thought of Thee, any lower thought than we have had in our sweetest hours of communion on Summer mornings when all was well.

So let us, abiding in the old confidence, stand upright at Thy Door, O Lord and Lover of our souls, looking for the Face long desired, the Face of Uttermost Love.

THEIR GARMENTS

THEIR GARMENTS

THEY spread their Garments in the Way. They flung them on the road before Him, many-coloured, gaily striped, some perhaps woven throughout without seam like His, the work of tender mothers' hands or of wives skilfully loving, a gay pathway for His riding as He came to His own, to Mount Zion, the City of the Great King.

And, when He really comes to reign, a King in His Kingdom of Righteousness, it must be so before He can enter His World.

Then all who go forth to meet Him must spread their strange barbaric pride in the body's clothing, their foolish changing fashions, their wasteful useless fripperies, for Him to trample,

not worthy, indeed, to be laid in the dust before Him, yet, thus renounced for ever, paving the way for His entry, where else He could not come.

Might we not even thus pave the little pathway to each heart's door, and so bid Him welcome—*now?*

Then, when He comes to call each away, the outworn garment of our spirits may be also spread before Him in gladness, as He comes to His Temple, "Whose Temple ye are."

THE HEART OF THE PERFUME-SELLER

THE HEART OF THE PERFUME-SELLER

HERESY to the Heretic, and Religion to the Orthodox. But the dust of the rose-petal belongs to the Heart of the Perfume-Seller.

So said a wise man long ago in the Mystic East.

On the first words of the saying we need not dwell, for have we not learnt already that the Orthodox may be very religious, and that what is called Heresy may be the very Light of Life?

But "the Dust of the Rose-Petal?" Of these words we so little know the truth that some cannot even guess their meaning.

Yet, not only to the hearts of the great Perfume-Sellers, of those solemnly called to be "Priests of the

Most High God," but to the hearts of all who strive, however feebly, to distil some pure Attar from the Rose of the World, to deal out, however humbly, the sweetness of God's high Garden—there comes this danger—or shall we say there exists this necessary stifling of the Spirit?

"This thought," they say, "this moment of uplifting, this word of the Holy Book, this breathing of the Ever-Blessed among the glories of His World, how can I use them for others? How tell of them? How distil?" The dust is for the seller, the fragrance for the buyer.

There may be, in truth, in all this, a fragment of the True Cross. "He saved others, Himself He cannot save"—they may give even of the perfecting of their own souls for others—with wise improvidence.

Some, indeed, may wilfully stay among the outward things of Worship,

Form and Colour and Gesture and sweet Sound, Dogma and Doctrine and Rite; to such, at such a time, the Dust alone shall be given, though even they may be allowed to sell true Perfume to the Humble.

God grant that some day a wind through the door may remind them of the Rose.

And let us pray for all Perfume-Sellers that being made aware how that Dust gathers in the Place of Holy Merchandise, they may often pass out thence, and walk alone with their God in His own Rose-Garden, so to win and keep for their hearts, not the Orthodoxy which may be good, or the Heresy which may be better, but the very Heart-Sweetness of Eternal Joy.

SORROW AND THE STARS

SORROW AND THE STARS

He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds. He telleth the number of the stars. He calleth them all by their names.

He who reads as he runs, fails not to see the wonder of these words:—the care of the Maker, who is Love, for Souls and Stars; the Voice that calls the shining companies across the breadth of Heaven *one* with the whisper that soothes the sorrowful; the greatness and the littleness of our God. Yes, all this he that runs may read.

But was there not another thought in the heart of the great Nature-Lover when he set those words together, the thought of the infinite comforting that

lies for sad souls among the wide spaces of the sky, and in all the vastnesses of Nature?

Who does not know it? The flaming of the Dawn, the embers of Sunset, and still more than these, the "sweet influences of the Pleiades?"

Who has not been touched by something no words can utter when he sees the waning moon with one planet at her side fading tenderly in the sunrise? And what heart has not been sped from its sorrow by the winter sky a-flicker with stars, Orion leaning westward at the Year-dividing midnight, and Sirius the glory of the South. Yes, though first those stars were to him waymarks of winter sorrow, dials on which hours of anguish were marked.

"He calls them by their names." Ah, what names? What sweet, what tenderest secret lies in that question. What are their names with Him? What is His name for this little

Planet of ours to which His Beloved came? Has the Cross darkened it, and given it a title of sorrow, or does it shine purer in His sight for that Shadow which for evermore is Light?

More mystical, more tender still, the wonder what is His name for thee, for me, written, not on the wide secret darkness of the Night, but on the white stone hidden close to the wounded heart, the Name known only to him who receives it from His hand.

NEVERTHELESS

NEVERTHELESS

NEGLIGENCES and Ignorances. How often these weigh down our sorrowful, our well-nigh despairing spirits!

Against wilful sin long years of struggling fealty may have taught us to watch; but then while we have gone gaily forward, eager and unafraid, a little duty has not even been guessed, a little kindness left undone, and "Inasmuch as ye did it not" has filled the wide earth and air with the thunder of its judgment.

"So foolish was I, and ignorant, I was as a beast before Thee, nevertheless"—oh sorrowful heart take comfort!—"*nevertheless* I am continually with Thee. Thou hast holden me by my right hand, and," since I

have no wisdom, Thou wilt give me Thine, "Thou wilt guide me by Thy counsel, and afterward receive me"—"to Glory?" No, I would not ask for that, receive me where, being with Thee, I cannot again mistake, or forget, or fail.

This "Nevertheless" I carry in my bosom, an Eternal Amulet of Hope.

THE DISCIPLE

THE DISCIPLE

He brake, and gave to the Disciples to set before the Multitude.

"Thou who hast fed us with the Master's food, why is thine aspect so sad? Why so faint and worn? We, who have come from far, sit here upon the green grass, refreshed by bread no earthly harvest yielded; but thou, who hast stood beside Him, what aileth thee?"

So speak the Multitude. My Master, answer them. Wearied with carrying Thy broken Bread, wearied with gathering the fragments, I stand before Thee, sorrowful. For me there is nothing, not even hunger, here in the Wilderness.

Tell me, at least, that this is by Thy Command, that in this also I am

one with Thee. Was that word true of Thee and me, "He saved others, Himself He cannot save"?

SUPER FLUMINA

SUPER FLUMINA

If I remember not Jerusalem in my mirth.

Jerusalem, "The vision of Peace," The City of high dreams, the dwelling-place on Earth of the King of Heaven, the sacred ideal of all memory and all hope. Sad hearts by the alien river may well indeed have wept, *remembering*.

We too remember Zion when Sorrow comes, when we know ourselves to be but exiles by this willow-bordered stream of Life, when the song breaks into tears and cannot be sung as of old.

But *in our mirth?* How splendid are the streets of Babylon, how gay its dwellers, its music how beguiling, its laughter how jocund! May we not there for awhile forget the

songs of Zion, and with innocent gladness, cease to *remember*?

Yet, were it otherwise—if with Mirth still Mirth we preferred the highest, the holiest, the dream-city away beyond the River, if we always *remembered*, what music would be heard! what laughter would be ours! such songs as they sing among the trees of Life, such sweet low laughter as that with which the saints remember, as they walk in the Light, the swift sorrows, the forgiven erring, of Earth's little day. *Non pero qui si pente, ma si ride.*

This is a height to which few attain. There are those, most truly serving the Master, who yet do not know its secret. So, when ceasing from solemnity, they become innocently foolish or strive after a poor cheerfulness: but these things are not Mirth, that beautiful thing made by our Father for His children, for those who are children

indeed whether in years alone or in the Holy Infancy of childlike hearts.

Does all this come from some unguessed distrust of Our Father's power in His World and of the sure Coming of His Kingdom? It may be so, yet the ache of the World's sorrow is keenest to the holiest of His Saints, and those who have borne the Stigmata have been the nearest in their *Remembering* to this *Mirth*, and in their *Mirth* to this *Remembering*.

AL FARD

AL FARD

THREE stars are dear to my heart, Sirius in its great glory, Arcturus in its clear shining, Capella dancing in the summer North between day and day, but one I seek in its starless space of sky, not for beauty or brightness, but for its name, the name some wise Arabian gave it long ago, Al Fard, the Solitary or the Lonely one, Cor Hydræ, the Heart of the Great Serpent.

Solitary! what wonder that that heart is lonely, the heart of the Evil Thing that strives with God, that wraps in its long winding folds the wide circle of the shining ones, shining like them, clothed as an angel of light, the Hydra with his many heads, his many skilfully imagined ways of

drawing the souls of God's children away from Him into the Night of Evil and Despair.

Who made that Evil Thing with the Lonely Heart? Was he indeed made by the Maker of all, a part of His purpose for the perfecting of the Righteous, a tool, a sharp torturing tool, to carve out the glorious image of Himself at last, flinging away the needless stuff of which worlds and souls are made? Could the best not have been without him? But then what of the worst?

Is he, can he be Thy servant in marvellous ways of which we cannot dream? Or rather is he not Thy strong Enemy? Is not the fight still always waged against Thee? Art not Thou, too, wounded and weary, dear Master, as we, as Thy weakest —as Thy World?

And the Enemy with the Lonely Heart? Hast Thou not said that *all*

things shall be put under Thee? Shall not even *that* heart break at last, conquered and contrite, and come to its sweet allegiance, ranged no more against Thee, *lonely* no more in all Thy Universe?

Amen and Amen.

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